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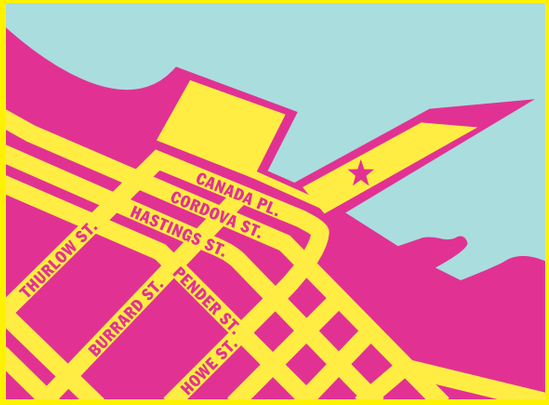

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'Moral obscenity'

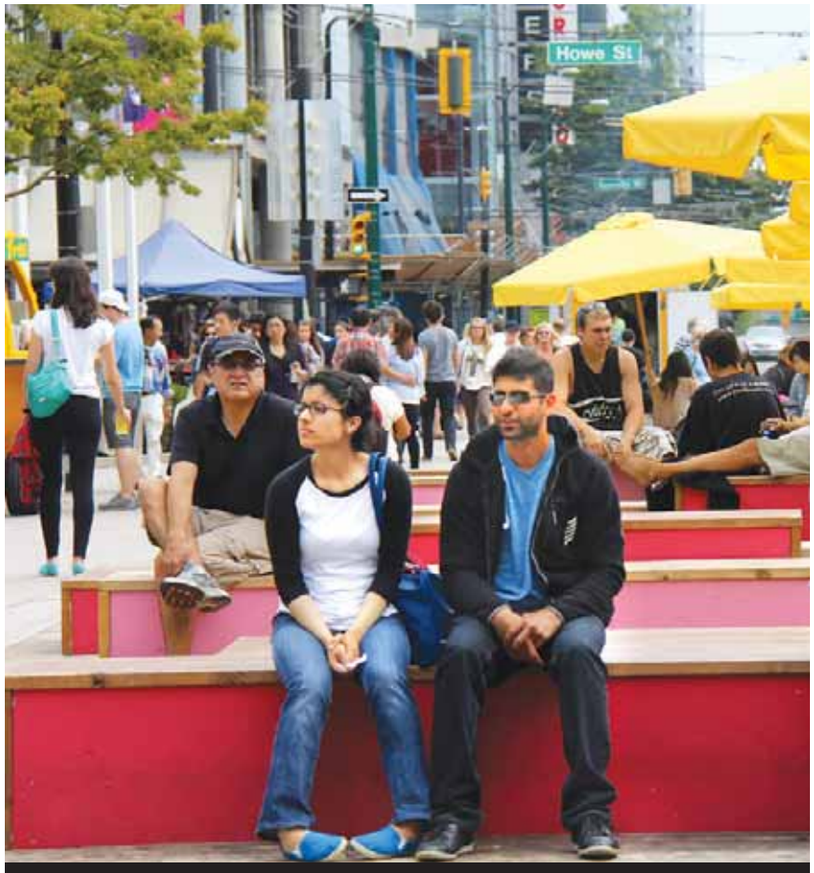
As UN experts investigate alleged gas attack in Syria, U.S. secretary of state comes down hard on Assad regime PAGE 8

Admission's on us: PNE

Following weekend power outage, fair letting in visitors for free today before 1 p.m. PAGE 5

THE FUTURE OF THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT?

THE SWISS COME UP WITH A NEW WAY TO BOX IN THE WORLD'S OLDEST PROFESSION PAGE 9



Vancouverites enjoy the seating along Corduroy Road before the installation is disassembled on Labour Day. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Final days for Corduroy Road

Installation. Section of Robson Street slated to reopen to drivers

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Corduroy Road, made up of the colourful cedar seating that replaced cars on Robson Square this summer, will soon be as much of a memory as the old logging roads from which it took its name.

The installation will be dismantled on Labour Day, and the 800 block of Robson Street will be reopened to vehicle traffic after serving two months as a pedestrian plaza, which the city is contemplating making permanent.

For the first time since the city closed the block in summer 2011, the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association has had no complaints about the square.

"Like anything else it takes a while to catch on," DVBIA president and CEO Charles Gauthier said.

The seating was easier to use than 2012's beanbag chairs and the excellent weather encouraged people to linger, Gauthier said, which was also a boon for the weekend Granville Street closures.

Until the city completes its downtown bus-service review, however, Gauthier said it's premature to discuss a permanent closure.

"There has to be a balance between convenience for transit and using our public spaces as our living rooms," he said.

Not all Vancouverites are sold on shutting the space year round, but nearby office workers, food-truck owners and passersby expressed their appreciation of this year's installation on Monday.

"It's a great place to sit and enjoy," said Oasis Qaiser, a professional who stops by a few times a week. He questioned if the space could function in the winter, but he liked the decrease in traffic.

Mom's Grilled Cheese Truck owner Cindy Hamilton said the closure was great for business, as it encouraged people to sit and relax.

While Hamilton would support a full closure, she acknowledged some retail shops weren't as thrilled about the lack of cars. "Maybe a little half-and-half is good," she said.

The park board will reuse the wooden benches and planks once they're taken down, said Sarah Siegel, one of the Hapa Collaborative landscape architects behind the installation.

It was fun and rewarding to build Corduroy Road, Siegel said.

"It just got used for everything," she said, though she did add it might have been "kind of a headache for drivers."

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Same apartment complex

Two women found dead in two-week span

Police are warning the public after two female escorts were found dead in the same New Westminster apartment complex within a span of two weeks.

It's not yet clear how the women died, but both deaths are considered suspicious and were of a similar nature, according to a statement Monday by the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team.

Jill Lyons, 45, died suddenly in her apartment in the 200 block of 11th Street on Aug. 12 around 10 p.m. Investigators are waiting for toxicology results to determine how Lyons died after an inconclusive autopsy.

Less than two weeks later, 48-year-old Karen Nobors was found dead in her apartment in the same complex. In this case, police found evidence that may indicate foul play. METRO

Adam Olsen

BC Greens name interim leader

Two weeks after BC Green Party Leader Jane Sterk announced her resignation, the party appointed her interim replacement Sunday.

Adam Olsen, former councillor for Central Saanich, will head the party until a permanent leader can be found.

Olsen lost his bid for MLA of Saanich North and the Islands by about 400 votes in the spring election. METRO

Kirstie Rapley and other tenants of an East Hastings apartment building rally Monday to bring attention to the building's condition. ELIZABETH HAMES/FOR METRO

'It seemed perfect'

$950 for one-bedroom. Dream apartment, with reasonable rent, turns out to be too good to be true as tenants rally for better conditions

In a heated rally, residents of an East Hastings apartment block protested outside their building Monday to bring attention to the insidious, unsafe conditions inside.

Kirstie Rapley, a disgruntled tenant, co-organized the rally with tenants'-rights group Acorn after a city investigation revealed the building's owner had failed to obtain an occupancy permit and the property was littered with electrical- and fire-code violations.

Lured to the building by its pet-friendly rules and reasonable rent — $950 for a one-bedroom — the veterinarian's assistant moved to the newly renovated 3683 Hastings St. E. in February.

"It seemed perfect," she said.

It wasn't until after she moved in that she realized her dream apartment was too good to be true: Puddles of water formed underneath dripping pipes in the hallways, pigeons could be heard fluttering around the drop ceiling and open doors allowed "sketchy" strangers to wander the corridors at all times of day or night.

Then, in the spring, she came home to find notices from the city advising of their investigation.

The city says it doesn't have concerns about the safety of the tenants and has allowed the tenants of the approximately 60-unit building to remain.

It has since been working with the building's owner to bring the building up to code, but Rapley and other tenants at the rally aren't satisfied by the pace of the change.

However, not every resident is disaffected. One tenant, who refused to give her name, hijacked a media scrum to praise the building and its owner and fought with rally participants over the building's conditions.

Rapley and others accused the woman of defending the building because she is on friendly terms with the building manager, but she denied that was the case.

The city says it is prosecuting the building's owner in provincial court for fines relating to numerous bylaw violations.

ELIZABETH HAMES/FOR METRO

How the city hired a Hells Angel

For those wondering how a member of the Hells Angels got a job collecting garbage with the municipal government, it turns out it's not part of Vancouver's policy to check criminal records for seasonal positions.

City hall explained its hiring practices Monday after news broke that Hells Angel Ronald Lising got a job with the city. Lising has been convicted for a lengthy rap sheet including drugs, weapons and assault offences as part of the organized-crime group.

Lising was hired as part of a large group of temporary staff under the CUPE 1004 operations worker II designation in May 2013 and, along with the others, will be laid off in the coming days, according to a city statement.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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PNE offers free admission Aug. 27 before 1 p.m.

Children enjoy the roller coaster at the PNE. JEFF HODSON/METRO

Rough year. Organizers make up for power outage after already reducing ticket prices

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

To spark people into attending the PNE after a power outage dimmed attendance numbers on Saturday, fair organizers will offer free admission to those who arrive Tuesday before 1 p.m.

The unusual decision to open the gates for free for a second time during the 17-day run is to thank those for their patience after an off-site transformer blew and delayed entrance by more than an hour on one of the fair's busiest days, spokeswoman Laura Ballance said Monday.

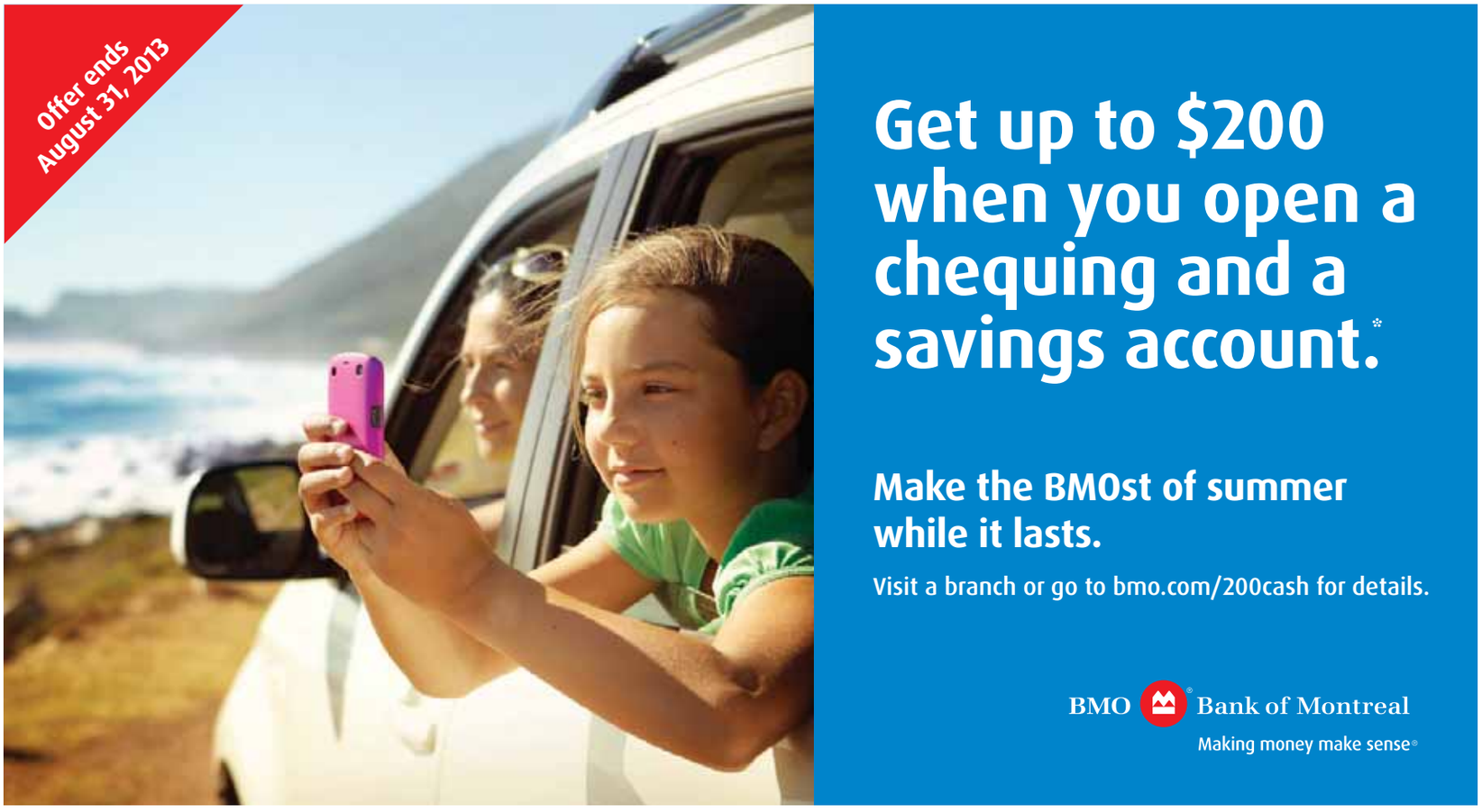
It's also to draw people who cancelled plans to attend the fair after hearing news of the outage, which knocked out power throughout the neighbourhood, Ballance said.

"We felt this was the fair thing to do quite honestly," she said.

It's been a challenging year for the fair even though it lowered prices to encourage higher attendance. The opening weekend had mediocre weather, and the forecast isn't looking great for the next week.

"We've had a couple obstacles, but the great thing is we are one of the great B.C. traditions and we've got very loyal and enthusiastic guests," Ballance said. "There are certain things you can't do anything about."

This is the first year the PNE closed its gates the first two Mondays due to soft numbers. That decision, however, was based more on the desire to spend more on programming during busier days.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Girl dies after being struck twice on highway

A 13-year-old girl has died in Duncan, B.C., after being struck by two vehicles on a highway.

RCMP Cpl. Krista Hobday said the teen was with several people walking across the highway south of the downtown core at about 3 a.m. Monday when she was hit by a vehicle at an intersection with traffic lights.

Hobday said the driver was helping the girl when a second motorist struck her and an 18-year-old man.

The second motorist apparently did not see that the first vehicle was stopped, she said.

The girl did not survive, and the man was taken to hospital with serious injuries.

Hobday said the area is well lit and that alcohol does not appear to be a factor.

"You've got two extremely traumatized drivers. The first one felt bad enough and now the second one.... You can imagine yourself in that situation, how horrible you'd feel."

Several others who were with the two pedestrians left the scene before an ambulance arrived, Hobday said.

Police are asking anyone with information to contact them. The coroners service is also investigating.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alleged defamation

Company sues student groups

Two international student assistance groups are being sued for alleged defamation for Facebook posts, tweets and leaflets at Vancouver language schools, court documents show. International Language Schools of Canada alleges the groups have published false and malicious information about the company.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pressure. CUPE launches ad campaign to push talks

B.C. teachers will "stand in solidarity" with the union representing school support workers in British Columbia, but the head of the teachers' union refused to say whether that means the teachers will refuse to cross picket lines.

With just over a week to go before classes resume, Jim Iker, president of the BC Teachers' Federation, said he hopes the government will return to the bargaining table in good faith and with the necessary funding to enable a fair deal. But when asked what teachers would do if the Canadian Union of Public Employees workers walk out, Iker would only say he preferred to remain positive.

The union representing school support workers in B.C. has launched an ad campaign meant to pressure the province.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mac Harb resigns from Senate, giving Liberals a clean slate

Senate scandal. Harb borrows $230,000 to pay back the entirety of his disputed expenses

Mac Harb says he never considered the Senate to be a position for life anyway. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Veteran Liberal politician Mac Harb handed his former caucus a gift just before its annual summer retreat, resigning from the upper chamber and paying back all his questionable Senate expenses.

That now leaves only three former Conservative senators hanging on in the red chamber, despite pressure to resign over a raft of inappropriate financial claims and connected police probes.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau had faced criticism from his rivals for saying he would welcome Harb back into the caucus once he settled the issue of his living expenses.

That problem appears to have been solved in time for the Liberal get-together beginning Tuesday in P.E.I., where financial transparency will be the main focus.

Harb had been fighting the Senate in court over its assessment that he had improperly claimed to be living primarily in a home outside the National Capital Region. That complicated legal battle has been abandoned.

"I have been contemplating retirement for some time as I personally never considered the Senate to be a lifetime position," Harb said in a statement on Monday.

"These past few months have been extremely difficult for me and my family and caused me to evaluate what more I could contribute in the circumstances."

Harb says he sent the Senate a cheque for $189,166, bringing his total reimbursement to $231,649 or the entirety of his living-related expenses.

Records show Harb has borrowed $230,000 by using mortgages against four properties to get loans from a numbered company owned by an Ottawa lawyer and businessman.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation quickly pointed out Monday that Harb will still be able to draw from healthy MP and Senate pensions now that he has retired.

Former Liberal Sen. Raymond Lavigne, convicted of fraud and breach of trust in 2011, retired before the Senate was able to strip him of his seat. As a result, he was still able to collect his pensions, an estimated $80,000 annually.

The RCMP is still in the midst of an investigation into Harb's expense claims.

Harb continues to defend himself in the expense battle. His lawyer, Paul Champ, emphasized that an independent audit released last May did not determine he had violated any rules, but rather that the rules themselves weren't clear.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Time to go

"My dispute with the Senate committee on internal economy made working effectively in the Senate unrealistic."

Mac Harb, in a statement

Tories should pay for Senate audits: Mulcair

NDP's Tom Mulcair THE CANADIAN PRESS

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair says the Conservative party should pick up the costs associated with auditing a pair of former Tory senators who filed improper expense claims.

Mulcair made the comments Monday as he highlighted his so-called "Roll up the Red Carpet" tour, part of a national campaign to publicize his party's support for Senate abolition.

The campaign opened in May, with the first stop of the tour in P.E.I., home province of embattled Sen. Mike Duffy.

Both Duffy and colleague Pamela Wallin claimed expenses related to Senate business while they were actually attending party events.

"The Conservative party should reimburse for the audit because it ... was made necessary because the prime minister didn't tell the truth in the Commons in February when he said there was no problem with Pamela Wallin's expenses," Mulcair said outside the Senate chamber.

Mulcair vowed to keep pressure on the Senate, despite the fact Parliament won't return until October. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has signalled his intent to prorogue Parliament and open a new session with a throne speech.

"In the last five weeks ... the prime minister showed up to answer questions exactly five times," Mulcair told a gathering of NDP staffers. "By the time the House finally reconvenes, it will have been five months since he's had to answer a question."

Senate reform is likely to figure in the throne speech, which will outline the government's legislative agenda for the new session.

The Conservatives are awaiting a response from the Supreme Court on a variety of Senate-reform questions, including how the upper chamber might be abolished.

Later Monday, Mulcair brought his campaign to the Nova Scotia legislature in Halifax, where he toured the building's Red Chamber, used by the provincial senate until it was abolished in the 1920s.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rim Fire creates grim pyre

The Rim Fire burns near Yosemite National Park, Calif., on Sunday. With winds gusting and flames jumping from treetop to treetop, hundreds of firefighters have been deployed to protect communities in the path of the blaze. JAE C. HONG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calgary airport

Immaculate drug disguise found out

A border services agent dug deep this month to find five kilograms of opium hidden in coffee carafes at the Calgary International Airport.

Anyone opening the carafes would have found nothing. The bottoms were removed, the drugs inserted and the bottoms rewelded. The carafes were then swathed in bubble wrap and placed in boxes, which were covered by plastic wrap and heat-sealed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Montreal

Shade of violent heritage dug up

Archaeologists have dug up the charred remains of seven books at the site where Canada's pre-Confederation parliament once stood in Montreal — a reminder of the heritage lost in its destruction by an anglophone mob. THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's the Bell Back to School Event!

UN experts inspect scene of alleged chemical attack in Syria

Damascus. Team collects samples, conducts interviews after surviving sniper attack on way to site

UN experts collected samples and testimony from Syrian doctors and victims of an alleged chemical weapons attack Monday following a treacherous journey through government and rebel-held territory, where their convoy was hit by snipers.

As U.S. officials said there was very little doubt that Syria used chemical weapons and Western powers stepped up calls for swift military action, President Bashar Assad's government vowed to defend itself against any international attack, warning that such an intervention would ignite turmoil across the region.

Snipers opened fire on the UN convoy, hitting one of the vehicles carrying a team on its way to investigate the Aug. 21 incident.

Martin Nesirky, a spokesman for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, said one of the UN vehicles was "deliberately shot at" in the buffer zone between rebel- and government-controlled territory, adding that the team was safe.

Activists said the inspectors eventually arrived in Moadamiyeh, a suburb of Damascus and one of the areas where the alleged chemical attack occurred.

In videos uploaded by the Moadamiyeh media office, UN inspectors were seen interviewing hospital patients.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this image taken from amateur video posted online, a presumed UN staff member appears to measure and photograph a canister on Monday in the suburb of Moadamiyeh in Damascus, Syria, where the Syrian regime allegedly used chemical weapons. UN experts collected samples and testimony from doctors and victims of the alleged attack on Monday following a treacherous journey through government and rebel-held territory. MOADAMIYEH MEDIA OFFICE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Dangerous new phase'

"Canada believes the only way to halt the bloodshed in Syria is through a political solution.... However, we understand that this solution is becoming more and more difficult as the crisis enters a very dangerous new phase."

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, who called Monday's attack on a UN convoy "absolutely abhorrent."

Evidence of attack is 'undeniable': Kerry

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared Monday that there was "undeniable" evidence of a large-scale chemical weapons attack in Syria, toughening the Obama administration's criticism of President Bashar Assad's regime and outlining a justification for possible U.S. military action.

Kerry, speaking to reporters at the State Department, said last week's alleged attack was a "moral obscenity" that "should shock the conscience" of the world.

"The indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, the killing of women and children and innocent bystanders by chemical weapons is a moral obscenity. By any standard, it is inexcusable and ... it is undeniable," said Kerry, the highest-ranking U.S. official to confirm the attack in the Damascus suburbs that activists say killed hundreds of people.

"This international norm cannot be violated without consequences," he added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria's ally responds

Russia: No proof regime responsible

Nations calling for military action against Syria have no proof the Syrian government is behind an alleged chemical weapons attack, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Monday.

Lavrov said the countries have assumed the role of "both investigators and the UN Security Council" in probing the incident.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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UN says U.S. has some explaining to do over allegations of spying

The United Nations said Monday that it will contact the United States about reports that the National Security Agency hacked UN internal communications, and the world body emphasized that international treaties protect its offices and all diplomatic missions from interference, spying and eavesdropping.

The German magazine Der Spiegel reported Sunday that documents it obtained from American leaker Edward Snowden show the NSA secretly monitored the UN's internal video-conferencing system by decrypting it last year. In three weeks, Der Spiegel said, the NSA increased the number of decrypted communications at the UN from 12 to 458.

Der Spiegel also reported that the NSA installed bugs in the European Union's office building in Washington and infiltrated the EU's computer network.

UN spokesman Farhan Haq said Monday that the United Nations will "reach out" to U.S. officials about the reports of eavesdropping, as it has in the past when such allegations have been raised.

Haq added that "the inviolability of diplomatic missions, including the United Nations and other international organizations, whose functions are protected by the relevant international conventions like the Vienna Convention, has been well-established international law."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vienna Convention

The 1961 Vienna Convention regulates diplomatic issues and status among nations and international organizations.

- Among other things, it says a host country cannot search diplomatic premises or seize its documents or property.
- It also says the host government must permit and protect free communication between the diplomats of the mission and their home country.
- However, wiretapping and eavesdropping have been rampant for decades, most dramatically between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Indonesia

Top clerics call for Miss World pageant to be cancelled

One of Indonesia's most influential Islamic groups is urging the government to cancel the Miss World pageant scheduled for next month, saying the exposure of skin by women in a competition violates Muslim teachings, an official said Monday.

Top-level clerics met this month to respond to protests from some groups over Indonesia's hosting of the event, even after organizers agreed to cut the bikini competition and outfit contestants in more conservative sarongs, Indonesian Ulema Council chairman Amidan Shaberah said.

The pageant is scheduled to be held partly on the resort island of Bali, with the final round on Sept. 28 near the capital, Jakarta.

Adjie S. Soeratmadjie of RCTI, the official broadcaster and local organizer of the event, meanwhile said that Miss Israel had dropped out of the competition, but declined to give the reason.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A poster hangs in an open, wooden, garage-style "sex box" in Zurich, Switzerland, that officially opened for business Monday. Zurich is experimenting with the drive-in facilities to relocate prostitution. JOHN HEILPRIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zurich thinking inside the box

Drive-in 'sex boxes'. Swiss city experiments with ways to relocate prostitution away from busy downtown area

No car, no sex.

That's the rule for an experiment Zurich launched Monday to make prostitution less of a public nuisance and safer for women.

Switzerland has long been famous for its mountaineering, chocolate and precision watches, but a lesser-known aspect is its legal prostitution since 1942, for which its largest city is one of the main centres in Europe.

Fashionably teak-coloured open wooden garages, popularly called "sex boxes" by the Swiss media, will be open for business for drive-in customers. The several dozen sex workers who are expected to make it their new hub will stand along a short road in a small, circular park for clients to choose from and negotiate with.

The publicly funded facilities — open all night and located away from the city centre — include bathrooms, lockers, small café tables and a laundry and shower. Men won't have to worry about video surveillance cameras, but the sex workers — who will need a permit and pay a small tax — will be provided with a panic button and on-site social workers trained to look after them.

On Saturday, several hundred residents, including many women, flocked to the only "open house" that Zurich will offer to give the public a better idea of how its taxpayer money has been used.

Most of the visitors said they came out of curiosity and haven't really come to terms with the idea, but hope it will at least improve safety. Others were amazed and a bit amused that a whole group of strangers would spend a rainy afternoon openly discussing professional sex.

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Minority accommodation.
PQ plan to ban religious symbols gains steam

The Parti Québécois plan on minority accommodations took a big step toward becoming a reality as the party that likely has the swing vote in the legislature backed major parts of it Monday.

Coalition Leader François Legault said judges, police officers and elementary and secondary school teachers should be restricted from wearing religious symbols like veils, hijabs and turbans.

Legault's vote is key because the Parti Québécois has only a parliamentary minority and needs support from one of the two main opposition parties to pass legislation.

Premier Pauline Marois expressed pleasure at the news.

"I'm happy Mr. Legault is ready to discuss and debate this," the PQ premier said Monday. She was asked about the subject during a news conference where she offered details about a $60 million reconstruction fund for the devastated town of Lac-Mégantic.

"I hope we have a serene, harmonious debate so that we can collectively draw some conclusions that allow us to live better together. That's what we want."

The Coalition's position doesn't go quite as far as the PQ's.

Medical professionals and daycare workers would be exempt under the CAQ proposal. So would public-sector workers who don't hold a position of authority. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Majority in favour

57%

A poll released Monday said 65 per cent of Quebec's francophones, and 57 per cent of the overall population, agree with the idea. Just 25 per cent of anglophone respondents said they agree.

Activists leave Russian waters after alleged threats

This image made available by environmental organization Greenpeace shows the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise entering the Northern Sea Route off Russia's coastline to protest against Arctic oil drilling on Saturday. WILL ROSE/GREENPEACE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Choppy waters ahead.
Greenpeace's plan for a peaceful protest upended after gunfire threats, says Canadian crew member

A Greenpeace icebreaker that entered Russia's Arctic without permission to protest offshore energy exploration is leaving after being threatened with gunfire by that country's coast guard.

"It was repeated several times in open conversation that they were threatening that if we didn't leave the Northern Sea Route that they would fire on our ship," Christy Ferguson, a Canadian crew member on the Arctic Sunrise steaming back to Norwegian waters, said Monday.

Russian officials weren't immediately available for comment. The vessel entered Russian waters Friday to witness and protest offshore energy exploration in that country's north. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thorny topic

While Greenpeace did back down eventually, it didn't leave empty handed, shoring up support for its cause and shining a spotlight on offshore energy exploration by Russia.

- Despite not being able to observe the seismic activity and carry out their protest, Christy Ferguson, a Canadian crew member on the Arctic Sunrise, said the trip was revealing. "We came here to expose preparations for oil drilling and what we ended up exposing was that, and something else — the efforts of the Russian authorities to defend oil interests."
- The Arctic Sunrise is registered in the Netherlands and the Dutch government has expressed support.

Acts of mischief

People dressed as zombies for protest go rogue

Police in Kingston are seeking a horde of badly-behaved zombies after several incidents during a protest march of oil pipelines in the Kingston, Ont., area. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec train tragedy

Lac-Mégantic's sister city collects books for town

A library destroyed when a runaway train exploded in Lac-Mégantic, Que., is getting a helping hand. Libraries in Maine are collecting donations to help rebuild the one in Quebec. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Activist shakes up Moscow campaign

From blogosphere to inner sphere?

Anti-corruption blogger gaining traction against incumbent in upcoming mayoral election

Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger and leader of the Russian protest movement, embraces his wife Yulia after he was released last month. Navalny was sentenced to five years on embezzlement charges, but was released the day after his conviction in what many have seen as an effort to legitimize the mayoral race. DMITRY LOVETSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A motley gaggle of hipsters, mothers with children and two babushkas with hair dyed bright red gather to listen to something they haven't heard in over a decade: a stump speech for Moscow mayor.

Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger who has become the best-known face of Russia's protest movement, is trying to take his following offline and into the street, waging a traditional campaign to win voters outside his base of the young and web-savvy.

Navalny has little hope of defeating incumbent Sergei Sobyanin — but polls show his star is rising. And if he gets a big chunk of the vote, the Kremlin will face pressure to show leniency over his five-year prison sentence on embezzlement charges, and the grassroots protest movement that fizzled out after Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency last year may gain new wind.

Navalny was sentenced last month but was released a day later in what many have described as an effort to legitimize the mayoral race and ensure that Sobyanin — who was appointed as mayor and is seen as a possible successor to Putin — is regarded as an elected politician with widespread support.

Sobyanin, meanwhile, is playing the regal incumbent: Throughout the campaign, he has been all but invisible, allowing the drone of jackhammers or whiffs of fresh paint that are signs of a Moscow makeover to remind voters of who's in charge.

Despite his almost invisible candidacy, Sobyanin is genuinely well-liked for the changes he's brought to Moscow. He has poured a yearly budget of approximately $54 billion US into the city's parks and cultural institutions, although other promises to tackle traffic and parking have been lagging.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

China. American held on prostitution suspicion amid crackdown on bloggers

Police have detained a Chinese-American venture capitalist on suspicion of visiting a prostitute in Beijing as authorities crack down on bloggers who have posted sensitive material on China's already heavily restricted Internet.

Charles Xue, who has more than 12 million followers on the Twitter-like Sina Weibo, was detained on Friday evening in a Beijing neighbourhood along with a woman, according to police and state media on Sunday.

The naturalized American citizen regularly reposts reform-minded content and makes comments on other issues including China's air quality and food safety. The People's Daily on Monday reminded the country's "big Vs" — popular bloggers whose social media profiles are verified as genuine — that they "should be careful what information they convey ... and use their right to expression responsibly."

Many famous Chinese, from pop stars to business tycoons, have amassed huge followings on social media and at times post material that the government doesn't like, such as calling attention to social injustices and questioning government policies. This month, Internet censors called popular microbloggers to meetings and asked them to agree to standards, including keeping social order, in a move observers have said has a chilling effect on public discourse.

State media have also accused some microbloggers of undermining socialism and promoting Western values through lies and negative news.

Xue's celebrity name, Xue Manzi, shot to the top of the most-searched-for terms after his detention was announced.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Great gall of China

Xue's arrest follows a string in recent days of people who triggered scandals online.

- **Suspicion of spreading rumours.** On Friday, police detained a reporter who alleged on his microblog that a senior government official was negligent with his public duties.
- **Suspicion of extortion.** Also detained is a blogger who initiated a campaign against an official who wore expensive watches that he wouldn't have been able to afford on his salary.
- **More extortion.** Blogger Zhu Ruifeng triggered a scandal last year when he released a video of an official having sex with a woman hired by property developers allegedly in an elaborate extortion scheme.

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Thai police crack down on nitrous oxide balloons

Bangkok. Authorities arrest vendors who are selling laughing gas in backpacker district

Thai authorities are cracking down on vendors in Bangkok's main backpacker district selling cheap doses of balloons filled with nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, to tourists.

Eight vendors have been arrested since police first noticed the trend a few weeks ago along Khao San Road, a pedestrian street lined with bars and cheap hotels, police Lt. Col. Pitiphan Kridakorn said Monday.

Each dose sells for about 130 baht, or $4.30. Pitiphan said the sale of drug-filled balloons started in popular beaches, such as Koh Samui, Pattaya and Koh Pagnan — an island known for "full moon" parties fuelled by drugs and alcohol.

He said police are trying to curb sales of the drug-filled balloons in the capital before it gains wider popularity.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Balloons filled with laughing gas are being sold to tourists in Thailand, and police are trying to halt the trend before it spreads. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Side effects

- Illicit sales of nitrous oxide could cause harmful side effects to users and give the country a negative image, said a Thai police official.
- Those arrested face up to five years in prison and a fine of more than $300 for selling medicine without authorization.

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N.W.T. Resource projects facing labour shortage

Finding skilled labour will be a challenge as major resource projects move ahead in the Northwest Territories, said the territorial minister in charge of energy and mining.

The territory will need around 3,000 new workers, with several new mines set to open over the next eight to 10 years, David Ramsay said Monday in Yellowknife.

"With our remote location (and) the cold weather, it may be difficult for us to attract people to live in the Northwest Territories, but we are going to put our best effort into that," he said.

Some smaller aboriginal communities in the Northwest Territories have a 30 to 40 per cent unemployment rate, so there's a big need for training programs geared toward the jobs that will be coming, he said.

Energy ministers from across Canada are holding their annual meeting in Yellowknife this week. Ramsay said he'll talk to his counterparts about the idea of a made-in-the-North pipeline, which could enable crude to be exported on tankers from the Beaufort Sea or from the Alaskan port of Valdez.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A man stands at the edge of Alexandra Falls on the Hay River in the Northwest Territories last week. The idea of a made-in-the-North pipeline is being floated at a meeting of energy ministers in Yellowknife. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mobile

Broadcaster orders BlackBerry Q10 smartphones

Smartphone maker BlackBerry says it has received an order for 2,000 new keyboard smartphones from Hispanic broadcaster Univision Communications. The company says the order for the BlackBerry Q10 devices will upgrade all of the BlackBerry phones used by employees at Univision, which is one of the largest broadcast networks in the U.S. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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WHEN WE GO TOO FAR WITH FOOD

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Our relationship to food is beyond sustenance. We photograph it, tweet about it and obsess over what it looks like and where it comes from.

In North America, we are living in an era of food-as-spectacle; celebrity chefs have been elevated from kitchens to red carpets while the rest of us fanatically share our own food porn across various social media sites. The Food Network airs Olympiad-like programming 24 hours a day to determine who can decorate, create and consume various different foods in the fastest possible time.

Our collective obsession with good cuisine is rivaled only by our masochistic obsession with conquering outrageously bad food. From Kentucky Fried Chicken's Double Down to Taco Bell's new Breakfast Waffle Taco, it seems there is just no limit when it comes to sandwiching calorie-heavy foods around each other and attempting to digest the result. We've pushed the boundaries of acceptable food combinations beyond the limits of good taste (literally) and are now just making ourselves sick in the name of extreme consumption.

One such culinary hybrid got the best of intrepid eaters in Toronto last week when the Canadian National Exhibition's must-try food of the season sent 150 people heaving over their toilet bowls with serious gastrointestinal issues. The culprit was a disgusting-sounding Cronut Burger consisting of a beef patty and processed cheese sandwiched between two sugary cronuts, a fusion croissant-doughnut popularized by Dominique Ansel Bakery in New York City. Even looking at a photograph of the monstrous carnival snack is enough to give anyone food poisoning by proxy.

And if the Cronut Burger is the ultimate example of low-brow dietary disaster, then Ray & Stark Bar's elitist new water menu lives on the other end of the spectrum when it comes to conspicuous culinary trends.

The Los Angeles-based restaurant recently introduced a 45-page leather-bound water menu, which boasts over 20 varieties from around the world to try by the bottle or as a tasting flight. That's right, dinner patrons can fork over $12 to sample a selection of bottled waters served in three-ounce tasting glasses. There's even a water expert on hand in case you need some guidance in deciding what brand of H2O pairs best with your pretentiousness.

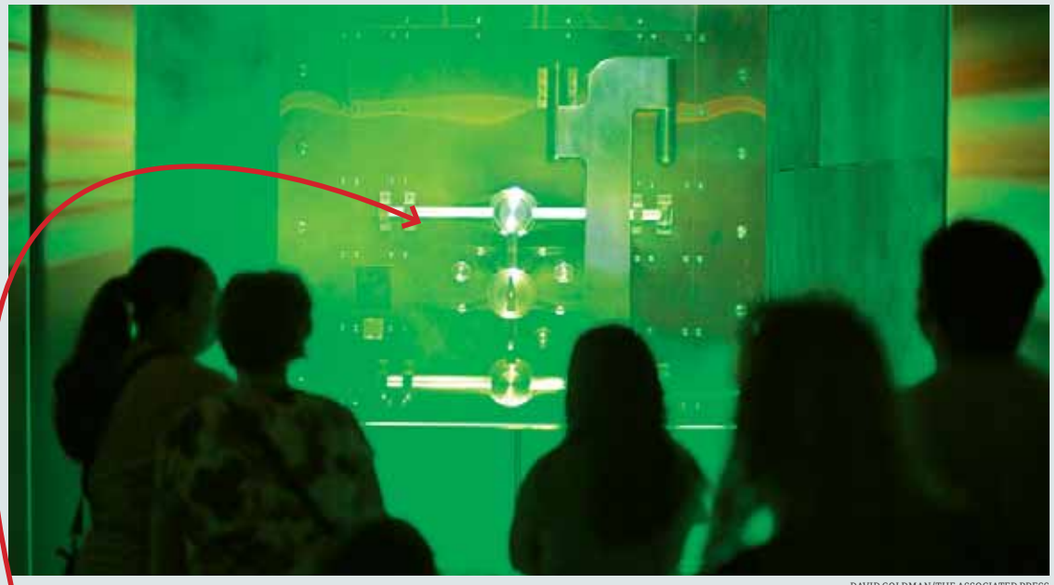
Enough is enough, everyone. We've taken foodie culture too far. I do not want to live in a world where people pay more than the hourly minimum wage for nine ounces of water or where experimental eaters routinely gorge themselves on highly processed gastronomic abominations.

All of this excess is making me sick to my stomach.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

You think Coke's formula is unchanged?



DAVID GOLDMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Major brands play up false notion of sacred recipes

Coca-Cola keeps the recipe for its 127-year-old soda inside an imposing steel vault that's bathed in security lights. Several cameras monitor the area to make sure the fizzy formula stays a secret.

"It's a little bit for show," concedes a guard at the World of Coca-Cola museum in downtown Atlanta, where the vault is revealed at the end of an exhibit in a puff of smoke.

The ability to push a quaint narrative about a product's origins and fuel a sense of nostalgia can help drive billions of dollars in sales. It's why companies such as Coca-Cola and Twinkies' owner Hostess play up the notion that their recipes are unchanging documents that need to be closely guarded.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In the 1980s ...

- Coca-Cola and PepsiCo switched from sugar to high-fructose corn syrup, a cheaper sweetener. The companies last year also said they'd change the way they make the caramel colouring to avoid having to put a cancer warning label on their drinks in California, where law requires such labels for foods containing carcinogens.

Twinkie, twinkie little switch

This summer, Twinkies made a comeback. At the time, the new owners promised they would taste just like before.

But a box of Twinkies now has a shelf-life of 45 days, almost three weeks longer than the 26 days from a year ago. That suggests the ingredients have been tinkered with, to say the least.

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Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

JOSE CSILVA/FLICKR

Among the many reasons to love living in the modern age is the infinite entertainment, wisdom and learning available in podcast form on the iTunes store. If you're the type to leave your cellphone on the bathroom counter as a shower radio, these three subscriptions are among the most reliable brain food you'll find to feed that insatiable appetite.

The Body Sphere:

An unfailingly fascinating Australian radio show that examines our bodies and the way we use and abuse them. Recent episodes include a surgeon's perspective on a liver transplant and testing the paleo-diet theory that modern life is wreaking havoc on our primitive systems.

Love + Radio:

Two ways to dip your toes into an unfamiliar topic are to have an expert teach you about it or get a first-hand account from somebody who lived through it. L+R takes the latter approach by using deep one-on-one interviews with people who have endured or enjoyed odd life experiences you have to hear to believe.

Pop Up Ideas:

Tim Harford smoothly hosts this BBC program that delivers bite-sized lessons on how economics, philosophy and other social sciences shape the world we live and work in.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Zurich will open drive-in sex boxes for safer prostitution. What would be in a Canadian 'sex box'?

@Medros: maple flavored condoms? prostitutes offering poutine on the side? lol I have no idea

@xRapunzalx: bacon!!

@Canucklehead_ca: Bacon, cold beer, two orders of poutine, a TV tuned to HNIC, government provided Viagra & an apology note.

@JacksActII: Info about treating sex trade workers with respect, the struggle for dignity, safety (for all), mutual boundaries

@lester04: maple syrup lube, a complimentary toque, and poutine to send you on your way afterwards.

@Shmingers: Wool socks, doughnuts, and an oar.

@_J_T_V_: a North of 60 DVD box set

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SCENE 2

All hail the Queen

Daytime TV.
Queen Latifah takes grassroots approach to her new talk show

She's reviewed the research, and heard from the focus groups, but Queen Latifah is relying on a different source to help discern what may — or may not — get fickle viewers to tune into her show this fall.

She's been talking to her aunts, her cousins as well as people on the street, "people who don't have that much money in their pockets at all," Latifah says, to find out what they are interested in.

"I am a TV watcher; I come from a TV watching family," says the newest celebrity to throw her name-recognition into the daytime talk show ring.

"I love to be entertained, so I sit and watch a lot of the talk shows. I watch Ellen. I watch Maury. I watch Fallon. I watch TV and I want to create things that I want. I consider myself a viewer."

In the rush to fill the Oprah-void over the last couple of years, a number of shows were programmed into the daytime schedules only to find themselves viewer-anaemic and wasting away on the schedule. It was a reality Latifah said she wanted to avoid.

"You kind of knew that was going to happen, that there was going to be a big rush into the field, and some thrived and survived and some did not," said the Oscar-nominee who had a short-lived talk show that premiered in 1999.

"Audiences got to decide what they wanted."

Audiences, hopes the Queen, will decide on her this time.

Can Queen Latifah be the next Oprah? Find out when her talk show debuts this fall. CONTRIBUTED

When talking about her dream guest, Latifah couldn't come up with just one name.

"I don't think there is a dream guest," she said. "I think the dream guest is who the audience wants to see. It's not just the A-lister or the president — any of those amazing people.

"But for me, the dream guests … are the regular people doing amazing and extraordinary things who you don't know but make for great television.

"The strength of the team that we have … is to be able to think on our feet and be able to do things as they happen in real life," she added. "I just want to give them a place where they can chill, open up and be real."

To fulfil her goal, Latifah said she wants to avoid the pitfalls of a highly structured show. The Grammy winner doesn't want to be mired down by a set format.

"My whole career has been based on not necessarily doing what everybody else was doing, and doing what I felt. I want to keep it open," said Latifah. "I will be keeping in touch with my audience. We will catch up."

And perhaps even sing. While Ellen dances, Latifah may just corner daytime TV's musical quotient. "Music is part of my life. Obviously I wouldn't be where I am today without music, so music will be of great importance to the show."

METRO

Also returning

Arsenio Hall — get ready to 'woot' again

Arsenio Hall

Arsenio Hall, whose first talk show aired from 1989 to 1994, returns weeknights on Omni starting Monday, Sept. 9.

METRO

Ladies first

The Queen Latifah Show premieres Sept. 16 on Global.

- **Competition.** Queen Latifah's biggest competition to this season's talk-show throne may be a former Housewives star. Bethenny Frankel, purveyor of Skinnygirl products and a former cast member of The Real Housewives of New York City, will premiere her show, Bethenny, on CTV starting Monday, Sept. 9. It is executive produced by talk-show maven Ellen DeGeneres.

Frankel

- **The Social.** Also entering the daytime arena is CTV's original production The Social, featuring Melissa Grelo, Lainey Lui, Cynthia Loyst and Traci Melcher. As its name suggests, the show will use social media and text messaging to probe viewers for opinions on the latest in news and popular culture while the ladies have their own round-table discussion à la The View. It premieres Monday, Sept. 2. METRO

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DVD reviews

The Great Gatsby

Director. Baz Luhrmann

Stars. Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan, Tobey Maguire

●●●○○

Aussie director/showman Baz Luhrmann is in his element whenever the lens turns towards the opulence of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jazz Age prose: jewelry by Tiffany, clothes by Prada, Miu Miu and Brooks Brothers, cars by Rolls-Royce and Duesenberg, anachronistic hip-hop curated by Jay-Z. What's missing is genuine drama. Leonardo DiCaprio is the right man to play Gatsby, possessing the same earnest desire to please and determination to succeed as Fitzgerald's 1920s striver. It's a marvel to behold him — lit him from behind with exploding fireworks in one of many great party moments — and to see how much he's matured since the youthful frolics of Romeo + Juliet, his 1996 breakthrough role and first film with Luhrmann. We're also reminded of what this movie could have been, had Luhrmann taken a few risks and not let Fitzgerald to do all the dramatic thinking. Carey Mulligan drags as Daisy and Tobey Maguire numbs as Nick.

Still Mine

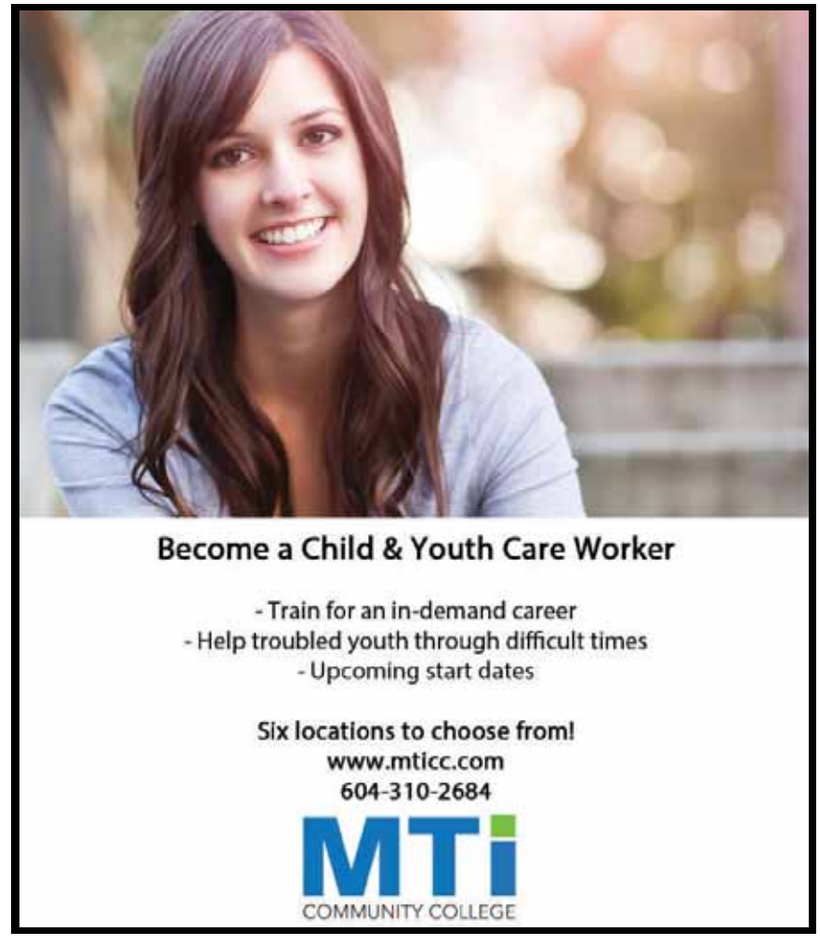
Director. Michael McGowan

Stars. James Cromwell, Ronan Rees

●●●●○

Toronto writer/director Michael McGowan (One Week, St. Ralph) attentively observes a love tested by infirmity and bureaucracy, becoming all the stronger for it. Pairing James Cromwell and Geneviève Bujold in memorable roles, this small marvel of a film is based on a true story of a Maritimes senior who breaks zoning rules to build a dream home on his own land for his ailing wife. He's not going to let red tape stop him from doing the right thing. Still Mine is essentially a two-hander, gorgeously filmed in New Brunswick (and also Northern Ontario).

PETER HOWELL



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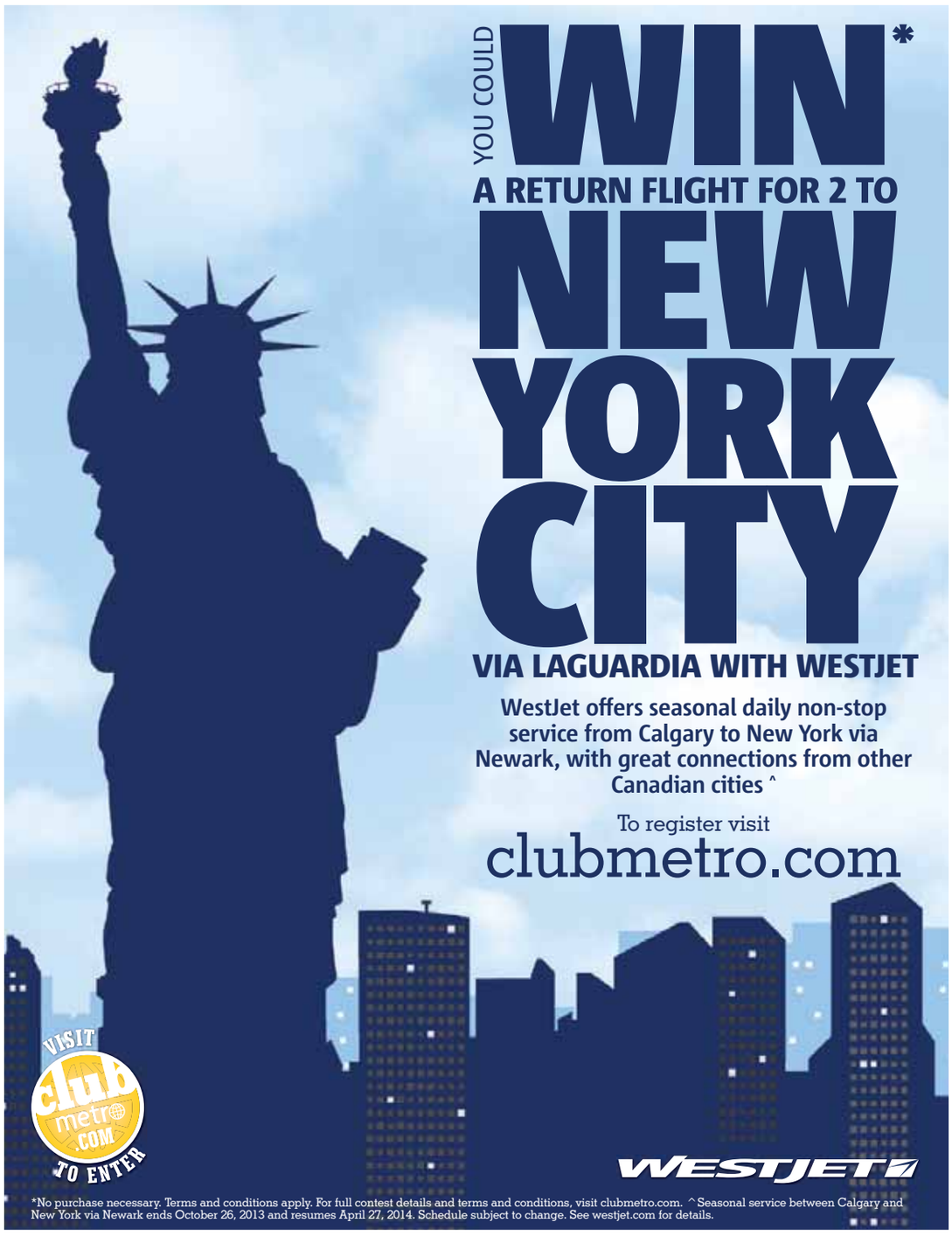
Selena's heart beats for baby faces no longer

Bad news for Justin Bieber: Selena Gomez's taste in men is maturing. The 21-year-old singer and actress, who has been striving for a mature, grown-up image, tells Us Weekly that her celebrity crush is following suit. "Well, I once said Logan Lerman, but now it's George Clooney," she says. That can't bode well for her on-again, off-again boyfriend, the more Lerman-like Bieber.

The truth remains, 'N Sync is gone

'N Sync

Fans of 'N Sync who thought the band's reunion at the MTV Video Music Awards might just be the beginning, don't get your hopes up. It was a one-night-only kind of reunion, Joey Fatone's dad tells Radar Online. "People are hyping this as to mean like next month they'll go on tour, but there's been no talk of it," Joseph Fatone Sr. says "Yes there are still fanatical fans who hope for one day that 'N Sync will get back together, but the truth is that they are all doing their own thing now."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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

The VMAs: Wherefore art thou Biebs?

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

Now that I've had a full day to let the clusterf— that was this year's VMAs sink in (and to recover from the 24-hour hangover brought on by the magnum bottle of wine required to get through the thing), I have some questions. So many questions (not the least of which is why they still carry on with this charade at all — next year let's just have a Best Knocked Up Teen Baby Bump Awards and call it a day).

And here's the first question: Where was Justin Bieber?! I can't be the only one who thought his dopey, overly-coiffed absence was conspicuous. You guys, I DO NOT THINK HE WAS INVITED. I think that Justin Bieber's 2013 Video Music Awards invitation was lost in the mail.

My God, if this isn't the swiftest fall from grace since Lindsay Lohan nose-dived her career into a big pile of cocaine and regret, I don't know what is.

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Snowball your credit card debts: Prioritize high interest rates

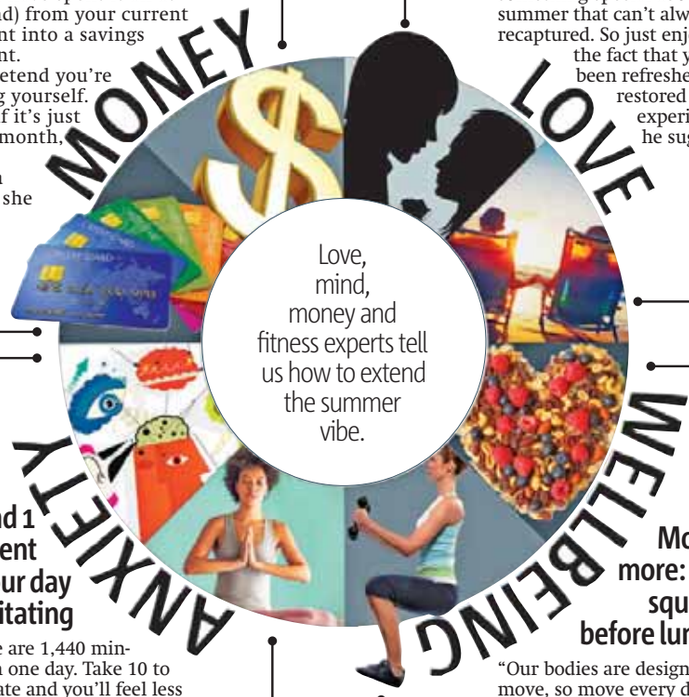
"People overspend on their credit card abroad because it doesn't feel like real money. Then their statement comes in, and it's a shock," says Jasmine Birtles, founder of Money Magpie. List your debts according to how expensive the interest is. "It doesn't matter how much you owe, pay the minimum back on all of them, except the one with the most expensive interest. Make that one your priority, paying back as much as you can each month," she says.

Pay yourself a salary

"If you can afford to go for a drink, then you've got the money to save," Birtles tells Metro.

For extra cash, she recommends you set up a standing order at the beginning of each month (you'll have spent it all at the end) from your current account into a savings account.

"Pretend you're paying yourself. Even if it's just $50 a month, that's $600 a year," she notes.



Sex is passive: Learn to let go of lust

"Working is active and sex is passive in that it's something that happens to you. When you're aroused, you don't want to do anything especially productive," sex therapist Stephen Snyder tells Metro.

"You can still have great sex in the fall, but there's something special about summer that can't always be recaptured. So just enjoy the fact that you've been refreshed and restored by the experience," he suggests.

Connection, not penetration, is the key to great sex

According to Snyder, people feel most alive when they're on holiday, and part of the grief of coming home is that you have to give up that feeling.

To cultivate arousal (when you don't have the time or energy for sex) try "simmering," a technique that helps keep erotic feelings alive and preserves a couple's sexual bond.

"To simmer, spend two minutes staring into each other's eyes and breathing in unison. There should be no orgasms, no stroking and no heavy breathing — just stillness," he explains.

Let your mind settle into your body

"If you're feeling anxious, try and bring your awareness back to your physical senses," says Puddicombe, co-founder of Headspace, an online resource for meditation techniques. "Observe your posture, notice any tensions or sensations in the body, any smells or sounds, and sensations of heat or cold. Mindfulness isn't about emptying the mind, or suppressing uncomfortable emotions, but learning to witness these thoughts and feelings, free from distraction and judgement. Acknowledge them and they'll gradually begin to unwind," he explains.

Spend 1 per cent of your day meditating

"There are 1,440 minutes in one day. Take 10 to meditate and you'll feel less stressed, less tired, and less anxious," says Andy Puddicombe.

"A healthy mind is the lens to a healthy life."

Meditation only works if you actually keep to it, so try and establish a regular practice that fits into your daily routine.

Move more: Do squats before lunch

"Our bodies are designed to move, so move every day. It doesn't have to be strenuous," says Duigan, who trains model Rosie Huntington-Whiteley and is the co-founder of Bodyism clinic.

Go for a walk.

"Don't just think about exercising as a way to look better. Embrace it as part of your life."

Divvy up your meals and lay off the alcohol

James Duigan, a fitness trainer, recommends eating five healthy meals a day, two of which should be smaller snacks.

"Snacking ensures you don't overeat and will also help speed up your metabolism. Swap sugary treats and low-fat foods (often packed with hidden sugar), for things like raw nuts, turkey slices, berries, vegetables or pea protein shakes (try Bodyism's Protein Excellence)," he says.

And stay away from alcohol. "It will make you feel sluggish, bloated, and reduce your body's ability to burn fat," he warns.

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Salmon cakes elevate canned fish to level fancy

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups thinly sliced seedless cucumber
- 1 tsp grated fresh ginger
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- 4 tbsp vegetable or canola oil, divided
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- Two 6-oz cans boneless, skinless salmon
- 1/4 cup low-fat mayonnaise
- 2 to 3 tsp prepared wasabi
- 1 cup crushed sesame flavoured thin rice crackers (about 32)

1. In a small bowl, toss together the cucumber, ginger, vinegar, salt and sugar. Let stand for 10 minutes while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

2. In a large nonstick skillet over medium, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil. Add the onion and cook until golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl. Reserve the skillet.

3. Add the salmon to the onion along with the mayonnaise, wasabi, crushed crackers and 1/4 cup of the liquid from the marinated cucumbers. Form the mixture into 6 burgers.

4. Return the skillet to medium-high heat. Add 1 1/2 tablespoons of the remaining oil. Add the salmon burgers to the skillet. Cook until golden, about 3 minutes. Add the remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons of oil, turn the cakes over and cook until golden on the second side, about another 3 minutes.

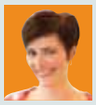
5. Transfer to 6 plates and top each salmon cake with a mound of the pickled cucumber. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/SARA MOULTON, AUTHOR OF SARA MOULTON'S EVERYDAY FAMILY DINNERS.

Wasabi-Spiked Salmon Cakes with Pickled Cucumber

This recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Health Solutions

Out with waste



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

According to a recent study commissioned by KitchenAid (which has a new Preserva fridge to solve the problem simply), Canadians waste $2.5 billion each year in rotten produce. Here are the top five abused vegetables and ways to reuse them:

Lettuce
Don't open the box of greens until you can use them. The nitrogen within is modified to prevent spoilage. Add a fresh paper towel to the box each time you use to absorb water.

Bananas
Blend with protein powder and peanut butter and freeze as popsicles when they are over-ripe.

Tomatoes
Lay wilty ones on a cookie sheet and roast at 275 F with olive oil for a couple hours. Use in pasta or as a bread topping.

Grapes
Freeze for use in cocktails or consume frozen on ice cream.

Celery
Freeze and save with chicken bones and onion ends then dump into a slow cooker when you have a bagful to make stock.

It's all about controlling the ethylene gas emitted as well as the moisture from fruits and veg. Think beyond the first pretty produce into a second life. Don't waste, people. Sheesh. THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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metro

Study puts a price on friendship

Big Brothers Big Sisters. Can you put a price tag on the big-little relationship?

JESSICA SMITH
Metro in Toronto

How much is friendship worth? Advice over lunch, encouragement at a bowling alley, shared laughs at a mall?

About $315,000 in income over a lifetime, $32,154 in additional tax revenue for government coffers, and $49,819 in increased spending added to the economy, according to Big Brothers Big Sisters Toronto.

The charity, which matches youth known as "littles" with mentors known as "bigs," has always seen immeasurable results from the friends, but set out to prove its investments are worthwhile, financially.

"More and more, people who are donating to charities don't just want to write a cheque; they want to say, 'How is my money being spent and what is the result," said Sandra Downey, director of business development and communications of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto.

So, Big Brothers Big Sisters Toronto recruited the consulting firm The Boston Group to help them put a price tag on the big-little relationship.

The Boston Group found 250 former "littles," now aged 25 to 65, from the organization's alumni records and a further 250 from an Ipsos Reid panel, said study author James Tucker. Another 1,000 people from similar family and economic backgrounds — generally single parent and low-income — served as a comparison group.

The people who'd had the influence of a big brother or sister growing up, on average, earned more and gave more to charity. They were more likely to report they worked in a senior leadership role at work, pursued a healthy lifestyle, are generally happy, are financially literate, make good life choices and have a strong network of family and friends.

"What I felt was really compelling about this was you can finally put a hard value around mentorship and filling a hole in a young person's life," Tucker said.

Former 'littles' are experiencing the benefits of spending time with 'bigs' later in life. ISTOCK IMAGES

"Full (disclosure): I was a little brother," he added. "It's no surprise to me that those people felt more confident, generally happier; they had a stronger support network. Therefore, they had much higher earnings than their peer group."

For Ada, 17, her three-year friendship with her mentor Tracy has had a big impact on her life. The two are heading to Montreal soon to check out McGill University, which Ada will be able to afford to attend because she earned a scholarship specifically for little brothers and sisters, which Tracy encouraged her to apply for.

"I had no means to fill out that application. I didn't even know what a scholarship was. I didn't know how much university was," said Ada. "Without her motivation and support I never would have done it."

Ada said her mom struggles with mental illness, which has made her do and say things that would hurt Ada's self-esteem, but Tracy's encouragement has helped her build it back up. "Look at me now. I'm a scholar. I'm going to be going to university, the first in my family to go to university and create a better life for my mother and I."

Former littles/control group

Employed full time. 68 per cent / 58 per cent
Average full-time salaries. $59,600 / $52,700
Volunteer for community service. 66 per cent / 43 per cent
Hours of community service per year. 95 / 73
Donate to charity. 77 per cent / 67 per cent
Average annual charitable donations. $395 / $329
Pursuing a healthy lifestyle. 80 per cent / 72 per cent
Financially literate. 81 per cent / 70 per cent
A senior leader in their workplace. 47 per cent / 32 per cent
Consider themselves a happy person. 42 per cent / 26 per cent
Strongly agree that they make good life choices. 52 per cent / 39 per cent
Strongly agree that they have a strong network of family and friends. 42 per cent / 28 per cent

Fighting fire with sound advice

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

Mr. Top 10, as I'll call him, isn't a fan of mine. "What success, (if any) have you had investing? My investments show in excess of 20 per cent average this year!! What are your top picks?"

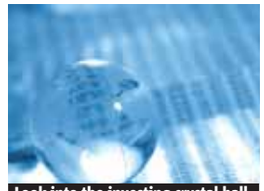
Mr. Top 10 (MTT) went on to castigate me for recommending GICs to an elderly, nervous investor and for not offering more stock and mutual fund recommendations. Certainly you can find a gazillion "pickers" with tremendous success in a given year. MTT's Canadian and U.S. funds have had a very nice run and I commend him. However, a single year isn't illustrative. It's more important to be a well-behaved investor than focus on short-term winners. Here's how:

Allocate your assets
Pick an asset allocation (AA) that divides your money among equities (stocks, exchange-traded funds or equity mutual funds), bonds and cash. Don't worry if everyone says you should be heavy into the stock market because bonds and cash return little. Next year things may be quite different. A portfolio with cash and bonds is buffered when the market heads south. And one day interest rates will rise.

Diversify
MTT's U.S. investments have done well over eight months, but who knows what the next eight will bring? That's why it's important to diversify within the equity categories. Don't fling money into dozens of niche sectors and all over the world. A mix of larger company Canadian, U.S. and global stocks, ETFs or mutual funds will do you just fine.

Dollar Cost Average
Invest regularly. No, you won't always buy at the bottom, however you reduce the risk of committing too much money at the top. Getting an average price over time is the goal here.

Rebalance



Look into the investing crystal ball. Kind of cloudy in there, isn't it? ISTOCK IMAGES

Once you've decided on an asset allocation it's critical to stick with it, even when one aspect of your portfolio is taking off. Examine your AA annually or so and rebalance back to those percentages if they're out of whack. You can use new contributions to do this rather than selling.

The problem with Mr. Top 10's approach is that you can have the best stocks or funds at any given time, but end up with a disastrous portfolio in the long run if you don't practise good investor behaviour.

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

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BCIT HELPS STUDENT LAUNCH CAREER

GARRETT BEIER MAKING WAVES AS A SECOND OFFICER

Imagine travelling on the world's largest passenger cruise ship for a living. For British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) student Garrett Beier, it's a reality.

Beier is about to graduate from BCIT's nautical sciences — diploma of technical studies (deck officer) program and through that program has landed a job as second officer on the Oasis of the Seas.

The four-year diploma at BCIT helps students to secure employment with shipping companies, including assistance with resumé building, and arranging interviews. Thanks to that support, Beier was able to land a job as a cadet with Royal Caribbean International and through that opportunity has become a licensed officer for that company.

CONTRIBUTED

He says the hands-on training he has received through BCIT has gone a long way in helping him launch his career.

"In all aspects the program has helped tremendously," says Beier, who hails from Port Moody. "The first year of the program was a wonderful mix of general sea knowledge. We covered everything from basic knot tying and ship construction to all things emergency related. The hands-on training, which prepares us how to abandon ship or fight fires, was fantastic because you really can't learn how to do those things without actually doing it, especially because if a fire happens at sea there is no fire department that will show up. We as officers are the fire department."

Based out of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Beier routinely sails to The Bahamas, St Maarten, St. Thomas, Jamaica, Cozumel, and the Royal Caribbean resort called Labadee in Haiti. He says the fact that he gets to travel and experience the pleasures of such beautiful destinations, coupled with the fact that he works on the world's largest cruise ship, is surreal.

"It's an incredible experience and surreal is the perfect word to describe it," he says. "When you arrive at the port on the first day it's an amazing sight. I've been on-board the Oasis for a year between training and as an officer and it still blows me away."

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CONTINUING EDUCATION SPARKS INNOVATION

Continuing education departments at universities and colleges across the country offer certificate and credit courses, online courses, and business-related programs to suit prospective students' training or skills development needs.

A recent Conference Board of Canada report says innovation depends in part on having a labour force with advanced skills to develop new technologies, but also to use new technologies. That makes continuing education increasingly important in today's world to help complete degrees or certificates and to enhance skills.

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By using technology for registration and course delivery, continuing education departments encourage participation within their respective university populations and service areas, and reach out to adult students and businesses across the country.

According to a study of Online Learning in Canada, between 875,000 and 950,000 students at colleges and universities study a purely online course at any one time.

For those seeking online opportunities, provincial directories compile links to programs and courses. ecampusAlberta.ca lists some 800 online courses and 70 programs at 16 Alberta post-secondary institutions.

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials compiles online and distance education in Canada at cicic.ca. *– M.E. Powell*

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KPU/UBC GRADUATE REPRESENTS CANADA

A one-time Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) student and University of British Columbia (UBC) grad recently travelled to Singapore to take part in a competition put on by Global Vision.

Brandon Hastings, who graduated from UBC law this past spring, made the trip to Asia as part of Junior Team Canada. An avid traveller, Hastings had already been to Singapore twice, both times for educational purposes.

The goal this time was to promote Canadian communities overseas and increase Canada's access to key global markets. The program also affords opportunities for our country's next generation of leaders, and offers Canadian employers a cost-efficient alternative to sending employees abroad.

"It's a great way to saturate myself in the intersection between international trade and politics," Hastings says in a press release. "Ever since my undergraduate degree I've been a pretty avid free-trader, and my experience learning about the law of the World Trade Organization during law school cemented that."

Having travelled all over Asia to places such as China, Hong Kong, and Malaysia, Hastings says he relishes the opportunity to represent his country in other parts of the world, especially for events like the Global Vision competition.

"Junior Team Canada is going to be an excellent way to get 'inside the machine,' so to speak, and see how and to what extent philosophies around free trade are operationalized, and what some of the stumbling blocks are," Hastings said before his trip. "I'm also just really excited to get a crash course in Canadian foreign policy, and meet a bunch of people that work to make the world a better place through building international relationships."

Before enrolling in UBC law, Hastings graduated from KPU's BBA entrepreneurial leadership program in 2010 with the Dean's Medal. He was also a founding member of the Kwantlen's business case competition team, which took home top honours in the international CaseIT Business Case competition for the past two years. Hastings currently sits on the KPU Alumni Association's board of directors.

Global Vision is a registered charity that has provided more than 25,000 young leaders with real-world experiences in trade, politics, business and ambassadorship. For more, visit globalvision.ca.

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SFU PIPE BAND VISITS SCOTLAND

Sporting some new members, the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Pipe Band recently participated at the world pipe band championships in Scotland.

This year's band has a host of new members, including five that made the jump from the Robert Malcolm Memorial Grade 3 band following the junior band's world championship in 2012.

Making their debuts with the elite band will be Brian and Graham Haddon, Daryl Techy, James MacNeil and Gavin Macrae. Also new to the band are Jamie Kubasiewicz, a piper from Winnipeg, now a first-year student in SFU's school for interactive arts and technology, and Eric MacNeill, who resigned as lead drummer with New York's Oran Mor Grade 1 Pipe Band last fall.

With 23 top-tier bands vying for top spot at the worlds, it goes without saying that SFU will have some tough competition.

However, the band has enjoyed some amazing success over the past three decades.

SFU has notched 20 top-three finishes in 30 appearances, taking third place last year behind eight-time winners Field Marshal Montgomery (FMM) from Northern Ireland, and Scottish Power, a band that enjoyed a wave of European popularity leading up to last year's competition.

SFU was the runner-up in 2011, again finishing behind FMM. In both of SFU's 2008 and 2009 wins, FMM took second place, which sets the table for an exciting rivalry yet again this year.

For more, visit theworlds.co.uk.

ENHANCE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

When Brett McCollum's students came to class last year, about 80 per cent brought smartphones and tablets with them.

"So the idea is to take the technology they're bringing with them and getting them to use it in an educational way, rather than sitting at their desk and text messaging each other," McCollum says.

The Mount Royal (Calgary) University chemistry professor asked his 60 students to pair up. Approaching it as a scientist, he divided them into two groups, asking one group to use their tablets, while the other didn't.

Students using the free Molecules app demonstrated a 30 per cent increase in their ability to identify matching compounds, after only 15 minutes of structured tablet use.

The use of tablets in the classroom is one of the top two trends in higher education across the country, according to the NMC Horizon Report, to help students engage with the material and with the process of learning.

– M.E. Powell

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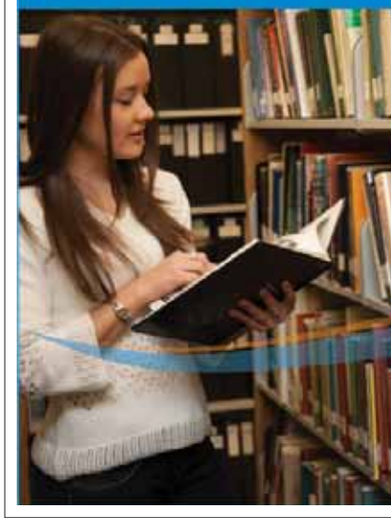

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In a field where well-trained professionals are in high demand, individuals hoping to get into the health-care field are people who must possess more than just book knowledge.

The Sprott Shaw College health-care assistant program teaches students the value of compassion and caring, traits needed for this unique career.

"Our health-care assistant program is for students with strong wills and warm hearts," says Sam Almadidy, regional director of admissions, Sprott Shaw College.

"Health-care assistants (HCA), also known as resident care attendants (RCA) or care aides, help individuals and families deal with common health challenges such as aging and mental health challenges."

In a recent WorkBC study, most health-care occupations are expected to have the highest growth rate in B.C., with 2,500 HCA related job opportunities expected by 2020.

The Sprott Shaw College HCA program teaches students how to work with a team of other health-care professionals to identify and address the needs of each unique client.

This program is designed to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to function effectively as front-line care-givers, and respected members of the health-care team in community and facility settings.

Other components to the HCA program are basic and advanced hospice palliative care training, violence prevention training, introduction to RAI observation tool training, acute care skills, CPR-C, first aid, food safe, and WHMIS.

Students will also participate in eight weeks of clinical training, giving them the hands-on, real-world experience for which employers look. This clinical training will take place in four, two-week placements over the 29-week program.

For more, visit sprottshaw.com.

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Whatever the reason, Burnaby Community & Continuing Education has a number of programs to satisfy your learning desires.

"A lot of the time, people don't know that the school district offers these adult education programs," says Denise Ayi-Bonte, vocational adviser for BCCE. "These programs are uniquely short but can get you into work."

BCCE offers a wide range of certificate and diploma programs to meet the needs of adult students who are looking for a new career or looking to improve their existing career.

These programs are offered out of variety of locations, and students come from all over Metro Vancouver.

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Each course is taught by an instructor who is knowledgeable in their field and has connections to the industry.

"These instructors are fully devoted and really put their students first," Ayi-Bonte says.

These high-quality programs follow professional standards and, where applicable, BCCE's programs are registered with or affiliated with professional organizations and adhere to the highest standards with regard to curriculum, instruction, and clinical labs.

For a list of courses offered at BCCE, visit burnabycce.ca.

LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

For some, learning another language may just be for fun, but for others, being able to speak another language fluently will open up more career opportunities.

In Canada, French is a great second language to begin with.

"Speaking only English limits your employment possibilities in certain provinces and abroad," says David Pajot, French instructor at International House Vancouver.

"At International House, we offer French classes from A1 (beginner) to C1 (effective operational proficiency or advanced) levels, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages."

In the past 15 years, Pajot has worked as an instructor for the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and has also taught for various international organizations (Interpol, NATO, the European Union, UNHCR and the International Organization of La Francophonie).

"In our courses, we employ a communicative approach — we strive to facilitate real communication that will force our students to think in French," Pajot says. "All of our teachers are native speakers."

SYDA PRODUCTIONS/COLOURBOX

International House Vancouver will offer weekly and intensive French courses this fall. The school also offers a range of languages including Arabic, Farsi, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Mandarin.

The next sessions at International House Vancouver run from Sept. 9 to Nov. 1. For more information about this program or the many other programs available, visit languages-vancouver.com.

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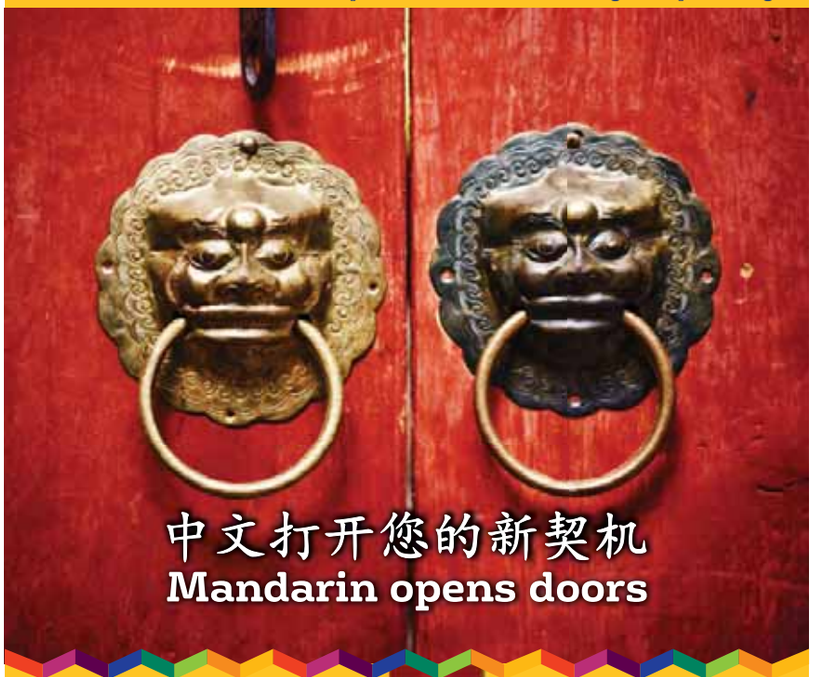

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- **Floral Arranging** Sep 4, 7:00 p.m
- **Legal Administrative Assistant** Sep 4, 7:00 pm
- **Dietary Aide** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **Dental Office Administration** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **Ecological Landscape Design** Sep 11, 7:30 pm
- **Residential Landscape Design** Sep 12, 7:00 pm
- **Organic Master Gardener** Sep 11, 6:30 pm
- **Landscape Horticulturist** Oct 7, 7:00 pm
- **Early Childhood Education** Sep 5, 6:30 pm
- **Hotel Front Office Operations** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **Building Caretaker** Sep 12, 7:00 pm
- **Industrial Warehouse** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **Interior Decorating** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **Reflexology** Sep 5, 7:00 pm
- **TESOL (ESL Teacher Training)** Sep 5, 7:00 pm Location: Burnaby Central School, 6011 Deer Lake Parkway

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

- **Makeup Artistry** Sep 5, 7:00 p.m Location: Brentwood Education Centre 4247 Lougheed Hwy.

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The Lions offence, led by QB Travis Lulay, managed just 240 net yards in last Thursday night's 39-38 loss in Montreal. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lions move on from 'embarrassing' loss

CFL. B.C. hosts streaking Tiger-Cats on Friday

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Monday signified the beginning of a new workweek for the B.C. Lions.

A time in which the team can put last Thursday's disheartening 39-38 loss to the Montreal Alouettes — led by a third-string quarterback in Tanner Marsh — in the rearview mirror.

"It's nice to get back to work to put it behind us," said Canadian slotback Shawn Gore.

The Lions, with a 5-3 record, good enough for third in the West Division, now look ahead to hosting the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, winners of three in a row, at BC Place Stadium on Friday.

The new day brought many of the same questions that have plagued the Lions through Week 9.

In Montreal, the Lions put up just 240 yards net offence.

When it came time to deliver a kill strike, or at least get a first down to perhaps put the Als away in the final minutes, they failed.

This on a night when the B.C. defence recovered seven turnovers, including four interceptions off Marsh, and two fumbles.

"It was a case of keeping them in the game, keeping their hope alive, when we could've shut them out," said Gore, who had two touchdown catches for B.C. in a losing cause.

"Losing like that is very difficult. It's embarrassing just to know that … we had so many opportunities to win that game."

Once again, head coach Mike Benevides was left emphasizing the need for consistency from his players, while maintaining this is the group he has faith in.

"I firmly believe in the men in the room. I firmly believe in the character of the team," he said.

US Open

Bouchard and Dancevic get past opening round

Canadians Eugenie Bouchard and Frank Dancevic won opening matches within seconds of one another to advance into the second round of the US Open on Monday.

Bouchard, of Montreal, managed to find a way past Czech Karolina Pliskova 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 to win in her US Open main draw debut. Dancevic, a product of Niagara Falls, Ont., defeated Robin Haase of the Netherlands 7-6(5), 3-6, 7-5, 7-6(7). Rain ended Vasek Pospisil's match against Rogerio Dutra Silva. Pospisil left the court leading 6-4, 6-3, 6-7(9), 0-4, but the Vernon, B.C., native appeared to pick up a leg injury.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Dickey brings A-game vs. Yanks

R.A. Dickey picked up his 10th win of the season and slugger Edwin Encarnacion drove in a pair of runs as the Toronto Blue Jays kicked off a six-game homestand with a 5-2 win over the New York Yankees on Monday night.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Correction

Whitecaps look to avoid capsizing

A story in Monday's Metro gave incorrect information about the Vancouver Whitecaps' next game. The match goes this Sunday against Chivas USA at BC Place Stadium. METRO

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will find favour with colleagues and employers over the next few days but it is up to you to make something of it. Let them know you want to work as part of a team.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You want to get away, so what's stopping you? Get out of that nine-to-five mindset and start making plans that take you to new places — as far away from where you are now as possible.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There will be a clash of egos today and it has been coming for quite some time. Say what you have to say, but don't forget you have to work with this person every day.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You must be honest about your feelings, even if it makes you feel vulnerable. You actually have nothing to worry about. The responses you get from loved ones will confirm they are very much on your side.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Money issues may be front and centre now but in the greater scheme of things they are somewhat trivial, so don't fuss about them too much. It's love that makes the world go around, not dollars and cents.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Friends will deny you nothing over the next few days, so you might as well ask for what pleases you most. Bear in mind though that one day they may ask something similar of you, so don't be too outrageous.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Treat others the way you'd like to be treated. That's good advice any time but never more so than now as the words you speak and the actions you take will have huge repercussions.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you play with fire, you must expect to get burned. You may have thought you were going to get away with something but today's events will awaken you to reality. Causes always, but always, have consequences.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You seem to be in one of those moods where money is no object, despite the fact that your resources are low. If you do spend too much, don't be too hard on yourself.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You need to be with people who excite you mentally. There are so many superficial people out there — identify them and give them a miss.

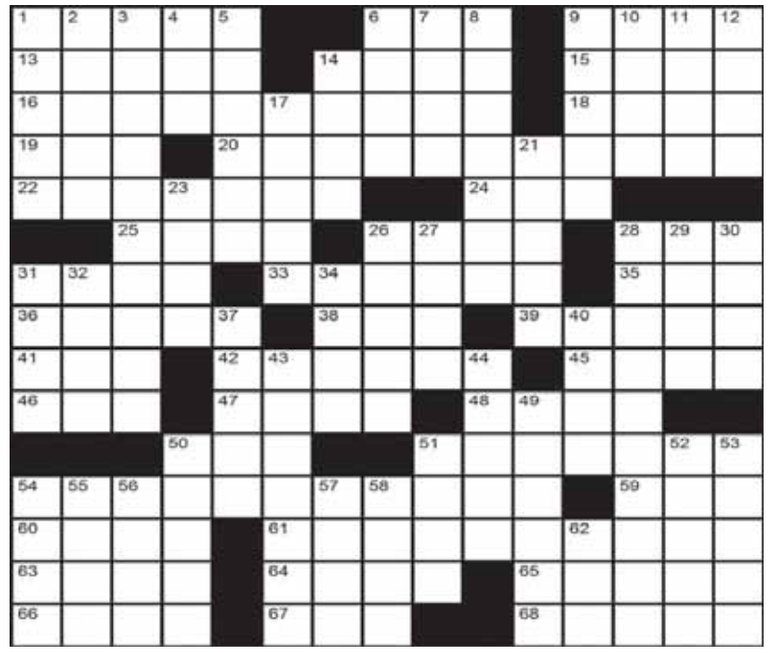
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Whether you're a realist or a dreamer, you will have to make some no-nonsense choices today. Your heart may be in the right place but if your head is on another planet you won't achieve much.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
The Sun opposes your ruler Neptune today, which among other things suggests that someone will challenge the way you look at the world. Don't let them put doubts in your mind. The world is what you want it to be. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

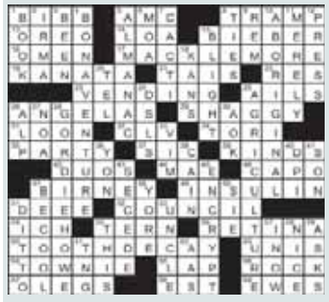
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Briefly summarize
6. "__ Wolf" (1947)
9. Apple variety
13. "...and forgive __ __ trespasses..."
14. Mr. LaBeouf
15. The Drifters hit: "__ the Roof": 2 wds.
16. Wild West transport
18. Whispery word
19. Ship signal
20. East Coast exports: acr. + word
22. Choices
24. Half of Ms. Gabor
25. Mannered man
26. Nevada 'aliens site', __ 51
28. Feasted
31. Glum
33. Father of New France, __ de Champlain
35. Prospector's find
36. Late night's Mr. Ferguson
38. __ Gatos, California
39. Donald Duck nephew
41. "Bad Moon Rising" gr.
42. Seaport of Italy
45. Curves
46. Bad guy
47. Basilica part
48. Recreation spot, in Quebec
50. Egyptian cobra
51. Revere
54. Burnaby, BC born musician from an eponymously-titled Band: 2 wds.
59. __ Beach, Hawaii
60. "What's __ for me?": 2 wds.
61. Art __ (b.1912 - d.2010, Radio/TV host in The States from Moose Jaw)
63. __-Flush
64. Pasturelands
65. Montreal's __-Dame Basilica
66. Canadian politics channel
67. 'Persist' suffix
68. Fall fabric

Down
1. 1904 to 1905: __-Japanese War
2. Impede, in law
3. CCG = Canadian __ __
4. Pre-Sept. month
5. "That '70s Show" actress Laura
6. Bloke
7. Puerto's follower
8. Classic five dice game
9. Dr. Sanjay __ (CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent)
10. Lhasa __ (Small dog)
11. Shake off
12. New Wave's Adam and The __
14. Kate Bush song: "And __ __ Love"
17. Loonie parts
21. "__ __ of you are aware..." (Manager-to-staff speech opener)
23. Yesterday, in Italy
26. Arcade game, Whac-_-__
27. Sly tactic
28. Fork, in a Montreal restaurant
29. Julia Roberts' actor brother
30. Kiki and Sandra
31. Gladiator's 800
32. Killer whale
34. The __ (Famous mountains)
37. Grind teeth together
40. Rowboat needs
43. Qu'__ Valley (Region of southern Saskatchewan)
44. Thread holder
49. Enthusiastic
50. House's accessed-by-ladder spot
51. Bowl-shaped pans
52. Gladys Knight & The Pips hit: "If _ __ Your Woman"
53. Peeled
54. Catchall category [abbr.]
55. Have _ __ (Zzzzz...)
56. Ms. Turner
57. Vienna, to Austrians
58. Fly type
62. __ truck

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

8		5				1		7
	7	6	2		5	3	4	
2								5
			8		7			
	5			4			9	
			5		1			
7								4
	9	2	6		4	8	3	
6		3				2		9

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	1	3	7	4	8	9	6	5
5	9	4	2	3	6	1	7	8
6	8	7	1	9	5	2	3	4
8	7	5	3	1	4	6	9	2
1	3	9	6	8	2	5	4	7
4	6	2	5	7	9	8	1	3
3	2	8	9	6	7	4	5	1
9	4	1	8	5	3	7	2	6
7	5	6	4	2	1	3	8	9

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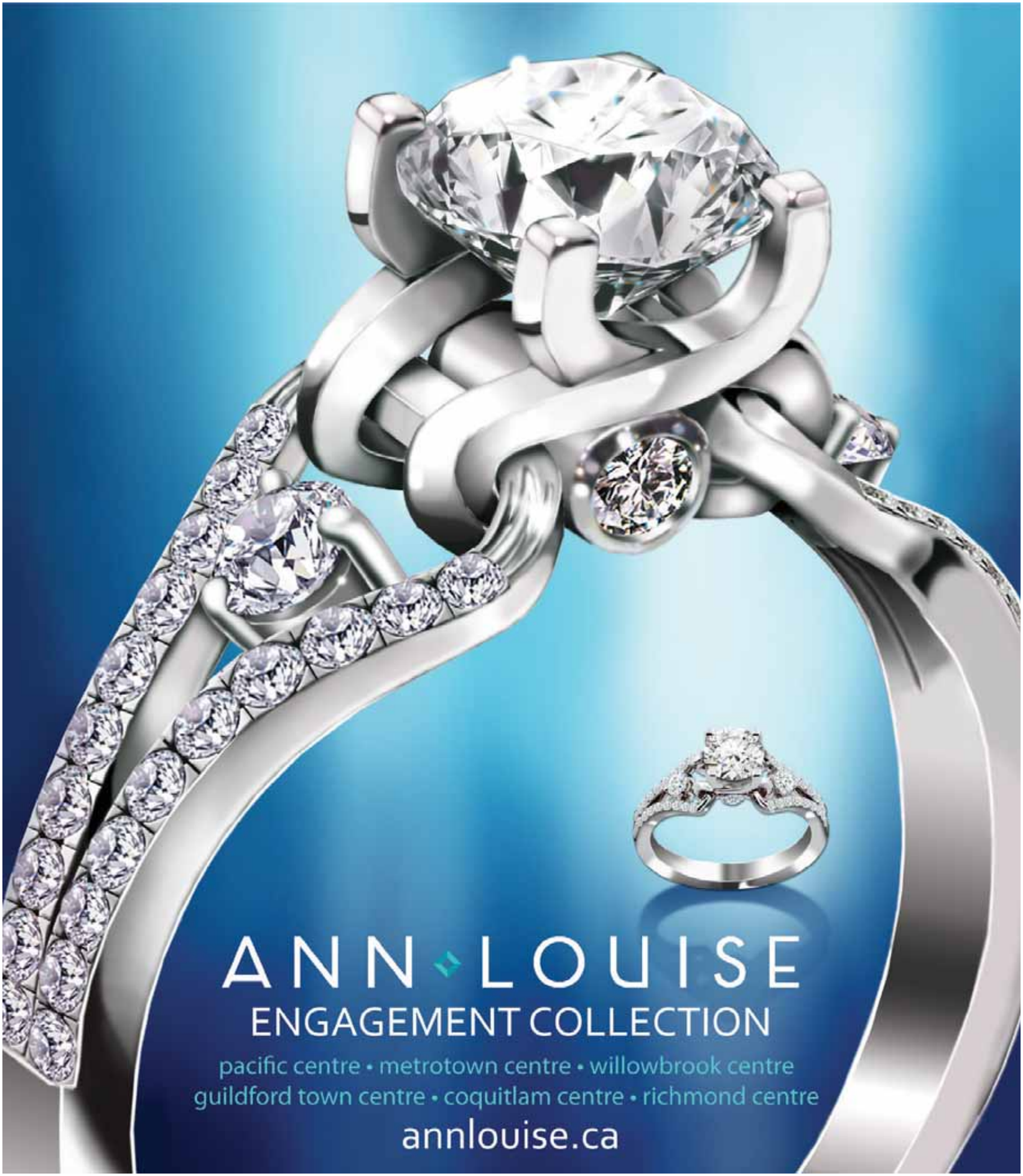
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